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RESTRICTED

EVALUATION OF MAPS SHOWING BOUNDARIES OF TURKEY WITH IRAN, USSR AND SYRIA

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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SUMMARY

The information submitted in this report was prepared in response to the following inquiries by the Army Map Service: (a) Which sets of maps, out of several sent to them, are best for showing the international boundaries of Turkey with Iran, USSR, and Syria? (b) To what extent are these boundaries demarcated on the ground? Facts have been given as far as information is available, but the report in no way represents an official position of the Department of State.

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I. TURKEY-IRAN BOUNDARY

The boundary between Turkey and Persia was defined by a Protocol signed at Constantinople November 4 (November 17, N.S.), 1913, by representatives of the Ottoman Empire, Persia, Great Britain, and Russia,[1] and was demarcated in 1913-14 by a mixed commission of the four powers. The resulting series of maps, Frontière Turco-Persane,[2] covered the boundary area from the Persian Gulf to Mount Ararat. Sheets XVIII to XXV, at the scale 1:84,000, with supplementary detailed maps at 1:50,000, cover the present Turkish-Iranian frontier from the junction with the Turkish-Iraqi boundary northward. The sheets indicate the location and numbers of the boundary markers.

An Agreement of January 23, 1932, between Turkey and Persia[3] provided for boundary rectifications in three places -- near Mount Ararat, Qutūr, and Mazbişo. A mixed Turkish-Persian demarcation commission completed work on the adjusted

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1. Protocol signed at Constantinople on November (17 N.S.), 1913, in League of Nations, Request by the Iraqi Government under Article 11, Paragraph 2, of the Covenant. Communication from the Persian Government. No. C.22.M.10.1935, VII, Geneva, January 11, 1935.
2. Frontière Turco-Persane. Cartes supplémentaires I-XXV, and various cartes détaillés, scales 1:50,000, 1:73,050, 1:84,000, and 1:253,440. Survey of India Offices, Calcutta (n.d.) Available in Map Library, OCL, Department of State.
3. Agreement Regarding the Definition of the Frontier Line between Persia and Turkey, signed at Teheran, January 23, 1932, in League of Nations, op. cit., pp. 23-25.

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line in September, 1934. An error in the description of the line in the 1932 Agreement necessitated a new accord dealing with the Mazbişo section, which was signed May 27, 1937.[1] Material available to us does not indicate whether or not there was a demarcation in the Mazbişo section after the 1937 Accord. The accord refers by number to several boundary markers along the Mazbişo section, but presumably they were taken from the older surveys. It may be concluded that the entire boundary as described by agreements now in force has been demarcated at one time or another, with the possible exception of most of the Mazbişo section. Nevertheless there is considerable variation in the way this boundary is shown on many small scale maps.

The Survey of India series, GSGS No. 3919, scale 1:235,000, sheets J-38C, J-38I, and J-38O have been checked against the Frontière Turco-Persane and against the texts of the 1932 and 1937 agreements referred to above. The Survey of India series, on the whole, seems to be the most detailed and the most reliable map of the boundary. It follows the Frontière Turco-Persane closely, considering the difference in scale, except where the line was later modified in the three areas named. In checking the Survey of India against the other sheets submitted by the Army Map Service, the following differences in the boundary were noted:

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1. D-540, Ankara, February 19, 1938.

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Iran, scale 1:1,000,000, sheet Tabriz No. 1 (1942/3). 1932 change in Qutūr section not shown.

Turkey, scale 1:800,000. Erzurum and Musul sheets. Too generalized.

Turkey, scale 1:200,000, sheets:

*C-17 Dogubayzit (1940). Generalized.

*D-17 Muradiye /Bargiri/ (1943). Generalized; better in Qutūr section than Survey of India.

*E-18 Dilman (1930). Generalized.

*F-18 Simdinan-Rumia (1929). Probably inaccurate as to location; does not agree with Dilman sheet.

Turkei, scale 1:200,000, sheet F-XVII Baskale (4/1943). Accurate but somewhat generalized.

The available sheets of the series Iran, 1:50,000 (1935-1941) were also checked.[1] The set belonging to the Map Intelligence Division is not complete for the frontier area, however. The sheets available give the boundary in about as great detail as does the Survey of India.

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1. Iran, 1:50,000. Geographic Division of the Military Staff (1935-1941?). Partial set available in Map Library, OCL, Department of State.

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II. TURKEY-USSR BOUNDARY

The present boundary between Turkey and the Soviet Union was delimited by the treaty signed at Kars, Oct. 13, 1921.[1] The Map Intelligence Division does not have any material on, or references regarding, the demarcation of the boundary. In describing the line the treaty text gives as its reference the Russian General Staff map at the scale of 1:210,000. The Division has on file an English edition at the same scale on which someone has traced the boundary line from the treaty.[2] Using this set and a later Russian edition of the same series,[3] the boundary lines on the two sets submitted by the Army Map Service have been checked.

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1. Jahrbuch des Völkerrechts, Kiel; "Vertrag von Kars; Vertrag zwischen der Türkei, Armenien, Azerbeidschan und Georgien, unterzeichnet am 13. Oktober 1921." Verlag des Instituts für internationales Recht an der Universität Kiel, 1926, pp. 220-226.
2. Caucasus, 1:210,000. GSGS 3708, Ordnance Survey, 1919. Necessary sheets of set available in Map Library, OCL, Department of State.
3. Five-verst map of the Caucasus, 1:210,000. General Staff of the Red Army, 1913-41. Set available in Map Library, OCL, Department of State.

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On the whole, the Turkish set at 1:200,000 seems to follow the treaty text more closely than does the German set at the same scale. Some of the differences may be due to variations in the location of topographic features on the Turkish and German maps. In some places, the German sheet K38XXVI agrees more closely with the Russian sheet D7 (1938) at 1:210,000 than does the Turkish Gilder sheet, but here again the differences may be topographic. The folding lines of the original Turkish maps at the Army Map Service throw calculations off to some extent. Lacking data from the demarcation surveys (if any has been published) and judging solely by the degree of fidelity to the treaty text, the three sets of maps rank in the following order in respect to the accuracy with which they show the international boundary -- Turkish, Russian (1:210,000, 1933-35-36-38), and German.

III. TURKEY-SYRIA BOUNDARY

The approximate line of most of the present frontier between Turkey and Syria was first described by an Agreement of October 20, 1921, between France and Turkey.

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The Convention between the two powers signed at Angora, May 30, 1926,[1] delimited the boundary in greater detail. The line was defined by this convention in three sectors; the first extending from the Mediterranean near the mouth of the Payas River to the station of Choban-Bey on the Baghdad Railroad, the second from this point along the railroad to Nisibin, and the third from Nisibin along the so-called "old road" to Jezirot-ibn-Omar, on the Tigris River.

A mixed delimitation commission consisting of Turkish and French representatives, and having a Dane as a neutral president, agreed upon the marking of the line in the first two sectors but was unable to agree upon the location of the "old road" in the third sector. The result was a re-definition of the Nisibin-Tigris sector in the Protocol signed by the two powers at Angora, June 22, 1929.[2]

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1. Annexed Protocol No. 1 to Convention of Friendship and Good Neighbourly Relations between France and Turkey, signed at Angora, May 30, 1926. In League of Nations Treaty Series, vol. 54, (1926-1927), pp. 207-213.
2. L'Europe Nouvelle, "Protocole d'abornement de la frontière turco-syrienne entre Nissibine et le Tigre," between France and Turkey, signed at Angora, June 22, 1929. 12th year, No. 602, August 24, 1929, pp. 1143-1144.

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The third sector was delimited in great detail and a demarcation commission was instructed to start as soon as possible. The Protocol signed at Alep, May 3, 1930, confirmed the demarcation of the frontier.

By the treaty between France and Turkey, signed at Genova, May 20, 1937,[1] the Sanjak of Alexandretta, later called the Republic of Hatay, was declared autonomous under joint guarantee of the two powers. The treaty also accepted the 1930 Protocol. A commission to demarcate the boundaries of the Hatay completed its work and signed a protocol of demarcation at Antioch on May 19, 1939. A little over two months later the Hatay was ceded to Turkey. This was effected by the Agreement between Turkey and France signed at Ankara, June 23, 1939.[2] The agreement

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1. G. F. Martens. France, Turquie. Traité de garantie de l'intégrité territoriale du Sandjak d'Alexandrette, Accord de garantie de la frontière Turco-Syrienne et Déclaration commune; signés à Genève, le 29 mai 1937. Nouveau Recueil Général de Traités, Third Series, Vol. XXXVI (Consecutive Vol. 132), Leipzig, 1939, pp. 654-660.
2. G. F. Martens. France, Turquie. Arrangement portant règlement definitif des questions territoriales entre la Turquie et la Syrie; signé à Ankara, le 23 juin 1939. Op. cit., Third Series, Vol. XXXVII (Consecutive Vol. 133), Leipzig, 1940, pp. 645-653.

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specified that the Turkish-Syrian boundary described in the agreements of 1926, 1929, and 1930 should be rectified in such a manner that the new international boundary southward from the point where the old line intersected the Karasu stream would, with certain specified exceptions, correspond with the boundary of the Hatay as laid down in the Protocol of May 19, 1939. The principal exceptions concerned the southern part of the line, where the Kessab district was to remain in Syria. The commission that had demarcated the Hatay line was to be instructed to demarcate the new line.

Unfortunately, no copies of the demarcation protocols of May 3, 1930 or May 19, 1939, and no maps resulting from the survey are available. References to these documents, in other agreements, however, are at hand. It seems safe to assume that the entire line has been marked, with the possible exception of the segments specified in the Agreement of June 23, 1939. Even these may have been demaracted, but the Map Intelligence Division does not have information as to whether or not the commission actually completed its work as directed. Some

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of the differences between the Hatay line and the later rectified international boundary may be noted by comparing the Levant, 1:200,000, sheet Antakya NJ-36-VI, NJ-37-1, 2nd edition (Sept. 1944) with the same sheet, 1st edition (1941, copied from French map of 1937). However, the Map Intelligence Division's copy of sheet Lattaquie-Hama NI-37-XIX, 1st edition (1941, copied from French map of 1937), does not show the southern and southwestern continuation of the Hatay line.

The two sets of maps of the Army Map Service, namely Syria-Levant, 1:200,000 (7 sheets), and Turkey, 1:200,000 (8 secret sheets), have fairly good boundary correlation, but the Syria-Levant set is the better for the Turkey-Syria boundary. To follow the southwestern portion of the boundary, however, it will be necessary to use one additional sheet of that map, Sheet NI-36-XXIV and NI-37-XIX, Lattaquie-Hama, April 1943. The Turkish sheet G15 Nusaybin (1929) appears to be more generalized than the corresponding sheet of the Syria-Levant set. The boundary line on both sets has been checked with the texts of the agreements of 1926 and 1929. The Syria-

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Levant series agrees with them except in minor details, the principal difference being near Killis. In so far as we were able to check the boundary around Hatay with the fragmentary description of the rectification given in the June 23, 1939 Agreement and with the earlier edition of the Antakya sheet, the copy of the Antakya sheet submitted by the Army Map Service appears to be correct.

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